

2024 Pastoral Services Appeal Letter

To our Corpus Christi Family,

Shortly after I arrived here in September, I quickly learned that, over the past 20 years or so, our parish has been known throughout the Diocese as one of the most generous contributors to the Pastoral Services Appeal (PSA). To that end, I was given several examples of extremely high quality, glossy, color brochures which described each year's PSA effort with a great deal of fanfare and information. I was quite impressed by the beautiful brochures and even more impressed by your stellar record of generous giving.

Sadly, as a frugal (my wife called me "cheap," but I think that's insulting), practical guy, we will not have any fancy brochures this year. Also, sadly, the needs of the parish this year are not as exciting as building a new facility, buying new chairs, or funding some other highly visible, grand cause. However, I do hope to provide you with valuable information without fanfare.

Our parish building, completed in 2006, is a magnificent display of Craftsman style at its absolute best. Every detail was intentionally decided upon so that the resulting structure would give glory to God and serve our parish well. However, as the building enters its 18th year of service, we must address several maintenance items (some of which have previously been deferred, some of which address current needs, and some of which are preventative in nature). Our goal is to restore our campus to the beauty that it reflected at its opening.

To accomplish this, the focus of our 2024 PSA is on several maintenance items that are expensive, but hardly "sexy." Some of these items, like new gutters, will barely be noticed (other than the fact that water will no longer be dripping on our heads). Others will cost far more than any reasonable expectation because of the "state of the art" technology that was incorporated into our building in 2006, but which is now obsolete.

Here is a list of the most important projects along with some high-level details and cost estimates.

Replacement Lighting – \$100,000

The existing interior and exterior lighting systems include ballasts at each fixture. While this approach has long been common for fluorescent lighting, it was an "advanced" approach for our other lighting. The ballasts are now failing with great frequency. We have already spent nearly \$50,000 on replacement lighting. Unfortunately, at this point, most of the specific ballasts that we need are no longer manufactured. We have been trying to replace burned out ballasts with expensive replacements. However, now is the time to implement a solution that will eliminate the need for so many ballasts. Conversion to LED lighting, while initially quite costly, appears to be the best approach. There is some good news: we have applied for a grant that may cover some of the cost of "security" lighting (including motion-activated, LED lighting where appropriate).

New Gutters – \$65,000

The existing gutters are steel and, as a result, are prone to rust/corrosion. This has caused leaks in many areas at the seams and along the length of the gutters. The reason for the rusting and resultant leaks is that water is collecting in various spots along the lengths of the gutters because the pitch of some of the gutters is not sufficient to allow the water to properly flow to the downspouts. It appears that the presence of this sitting water on and off for 17 years has led to rusting and holes. The estimate includes replacing the gutters with new aluminum gutters that match the building in color and design.

Woodwork Refinishing / General Painting - \$25,000

The wood doors, particularly those at the main entry points to the Grand Hall, show signs of exposure to sun and weather. We will explore options to return the doors to their original luster. We will also address interior woodwork, painting, and wall coverings.

Grand Hall Modifications - \$25,000

Converting the Grand Hall into our permanent worship space – our Church – will require some minor structural modifications, some electrical work, and several small tasks and projects to ensure that the space is as beautiful, as sacred, and as functional as possible.

New Phone System - \$25,000

Our phone system is currently functioning. However, the components are obsolete. Soon we will likely have a catastrophic failure which will bring our system down for an extended period. To avoid that potential risk, we are hoping to replace our system. We will work with experts at the Diocese who have assisted several parishes which have replaced their aging phone systems over the past five years.

Heating, Ventilation, & Air Conditioning (HVAC) - \$25,000

Since July 2023, our offices have had no HVAC because a control board failed and a replacement was not available. Also, one of the two units which provides HVAC to the Grand Hall is currently down. It is a matter of time before one or more of our other aging units will need significant repairs or replacement. This estimate addresses current needs as well as repairs likely to be necessary within the next 12-18 months.

Our Diocesan PSA assessment is \$100,000. The above items total \$265,000. That means, to fully fund our PSA assessment as well as the above items, we must raise a total of \$365,000 in PSA contributions this year. That is indeed a lofty goal but, glossy brochures or not, Corpus Christi has always risen to the challenges before us! Wherever we land on PSA, once we have a reasonable indication of the amount of funding that we will have available, we will be able to prioritize projects and begin work. Therefore, even if you plan to pay your pledge over 12 months, we can count on the entirety of your pledge as soon as you submit it. We hope to complete the most critical of these projects prior to our 25th Anniversary celebration in June.

Thank you for your consideration and continued support of Corpus Christi! We exist solely to serve each of you, and we could not exist without your generosity. May God richly bless you and your families!

Faithfully yours,

Fr. Mike